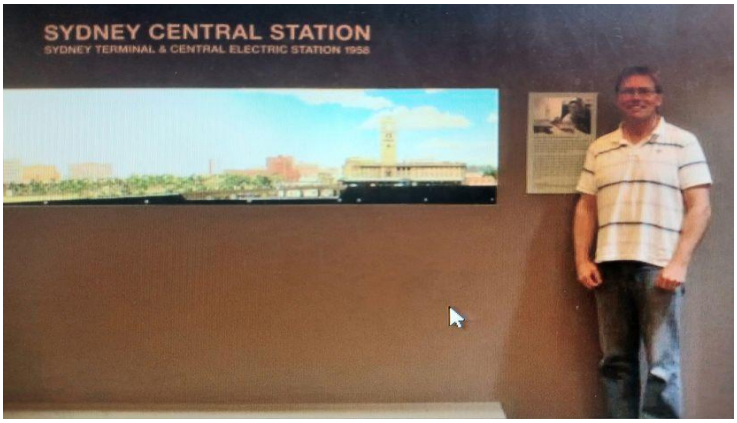
MMR_0712 Ross Balderson



My working career began as an apprentice Electrical fitter. Once completed I continued on with a second trade course for Industrial Electronics. At the end of all the intense homework and study I decided the next course would be a wood carving course. No homework just pure creativeness and not much thinking. These courses have all assisted greatly throughout the progress of my modelling years as the hobby covers such a diverse range of trades and skills.

My interest in model railways started with the construction of an American N scale Union Pacific layout when I was 12 years old. Even at this age I began scratch building from balsa wood and paper all of my model structures as well as creating two handmade "A" model Ford trucks for this layout.

I then joined my first club being the Canberra Model Railway Club in 1974 which required my father to be the official member until I turned seventeen. Nearing the completion of my American layout I started to develop an interest for modelling N scale New South Wales (N.S.W.) and have continued modelling this prototype ever since.

There was a greater challenge modelling N scale N.S.W, as there was nothing commercially available and at the time very few people had taken on modelling N.S.W in this scale.

I have produced four N scale prototype N.S.W exhibition Layouts so far. Once again virtually everything had been scratch built for these layouts. My first layout was of Bungendore, which is now my home town. The next was of Captains Flat set in 1961, which is a mining town located 38 km south of Bungendore. The third layout was a six year project of Australia's largest railway station Sydney Central set in 1958.

I have also scratch built all of the Australian motor vehicles for the era from cars, trucks, busses and a Sydney tram. They were all created from handmade brass masters. All the door lines and windows were etched into the brass bodied then mouldered and cast in a clear resin. Each vehicle was then masked and spray painted the appropriate colours. I have produced many other road vehicles since, that cover English and American prototypes from the 1930s through to the year 2000. These motor vehicles were in demand from friends and other modellers so I have had them caste up in pewter and sold under the registered name of "Rosco Models".

My fourth and latest prototype layout is of Newcastle, which is the second largest city in N.S.W set in 1899. In this era there were no motor cars, only horse drawn vehicles. Everything had to be scratch built. All of the structures, which included existing buildings as well as ones that are now long gone.

Ships and tugboats of the era that worked Newcastle harbour were also handmade to scale as well as creating all of the horse drawn vehicles that fill Newcastle's streets. Also the majority of early day NSW railway carriages have been scratch built.

I joined the NMRA on the 10th of April 2010. At this point I had just completed modelling Sydney Central and the commencement of Newcastle 1899 was nearing. The members of our Australasian Region division 2 group have watched the progress of Newcastle over a 10 year period from start to finish.

It has been a great experience and privilege for me, sharing the gradual progress of my layout with the NMRA group.

My AP category achievements started in 2011 with the Golden Spike, Scenery, Prototype, Structures and Author. It has taken another 11 years preparation until 2022 when I was satisfied with details in Newcastle to complete the remaining categories for Civil, Electrical, and Cars.

Throughout my time with modelling I have written numerous major articles for the Australian Model Railway Magazine and the English Continental Modeller. I have also co-written a 64 page book on modelling with styrene called "All Stations to Central".

I am currently the AP judge for the Australasian division 2 region.

Certificates Earned Ross Balderson, MMR® #712

Master Builder – Cars

Master Builder – Structures

Master Builder – Scenery

Master Builder – Prototype Models

Model Railroad Engineer – Civil

Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical

Model Railroad Author